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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; September 30, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

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Chosun Ilbo

New Prime Minister: "ROKG will Consider Modifying Sejong City Project to Develop Sejong into a Self-Sufficient City like Songdo"

JoongAng Ilbo

Questions Raised over Water Quality of Four-River Restoration Project; Environment Ministry Asks for Review of Effects of 16 Reservoirs

Dong-a Ilbo

2.4 Trillion Won Needed to Offset Civil Servants' Pension Deficit

Hankook Ilbo

ROKG Urged to Designate 20 More Districts Nationwide as "Property Speculation Zones"

Hankyoreh Shinmun

ROKG Suspected of Inflating Projections of Tax Revenues to Push for Tax Cuts

Segye Ilbo

100 Franchise Brands to be Fostered by 2012

Seoul Shinmun

Chief Prosecutor Promises Change

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

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Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg arrived in Seoul yesterday as part of a five-nation Asian tour. He was quoted as saying in Seoul: "(Washington) is holding useful consultations with relevant countries (on U.S.-North Korea talks.) I still have nothing to say (about the timing of U.S.-North Korea talks.)" (JoongAng)

Vice Unification Minister Hong Yang-ho told reporters yesterday that the resumption of tours to Mt. Kumgang in North Korea is not related to the North's nuclear issue. (All)

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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Speaking at the UN General Assembly yesterday, North Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Pak Kil-yn said that if more sanctions were imposed on North Korea for its nuclear and missile programs, the North would strengthen its nuclear arsenal in response. He went on to say that the North would "react to dialogue with dialogue." (JoongAng, Dong-a, Hankook, Hankyoreh, Segye, Seoul)

Kurt Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, said yesterday that any bilateral discussions with North Korea would be "designed towards moving back rapidly and very clearly to a Six-Party framework." (JoongAng, Dong-a, Hankook)

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Jiang Yu, in a Sept. 29 regular briefing, indicated that China is poised to provide substantial economic aid to North Korea when Premier Wen Jiabao visits Pyongyang on Oct. 4-6. (Chosun, Segye)

## MEDIA ANALYSIS

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-N. Korea

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Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo quoted Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg as saying in Seoul yesterday: "(Washington) is holding useful consultations with relevant countries (on U.S.-North Korea talks.) I still have nothing to say (about the timing of U.S.-North Korea talks.)"

Most ROK media noted Sept. 28 press remarks by Kurt Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, in which he said: "I think one of the lessons that the U.S. has learned in this process is a certain degree of patience pays off. If there were to be any bilateral interactions between the U.S. and North Korea, they'd be designed towards moving back rapidly and very clearly to a Six-Party framework for formal interactions with our North Korean interlocutors."

Most media also gave wide coverage to North Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Pak Kil-yn's speech at the UN General Assembly yesterday, quoting him as saying: "North Korea's position is to react to dialogue with dialogue and to respond to sanctions by strengthening nuclear deterrence. If the U.S. comes to dialogue with sanctions, we will also participate in dialogue with bolstered nuclear deterrence."

Moderate Hankook Ilbo wrote in the headline: "North Korea Raises Stakes Ahead of Bilateral Talks with U.S." Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun portrayed this North Korean statement as a response to the Obama Administration's "two-track strategy" of dialogue and sanctions.

Conservative Chosun Ilbo and Segye Ilbo reported that China indicated its intention to provide substantial economic aid to North Korea when Premier Wen Jiabao visits the North on Oct. 4-6. The two newspapers quoted Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Jiang Yu as saying in a Sept. 29 regular briefing: "A series of cooperation agreements will be signed with North Korea in areas including economy, trade, education and tourism."

Conservative Chosun further quoted Jiang as saying: "China's position is that resolving the North Korean nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiations will benefit everyone. The Six-Party Talks are an effective and realistic way to resolve the nuclear issue."

STEPHENS